

VZCZCXRO1363
OO RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHML #2624/01 3330907
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 280907Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2547
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 2402
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI IMMEDIATE 0514
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA IMMEDIATE 0125
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI IMMEDIATE 0895
RHHMUNA/CDRUSPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 002624

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MTS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/29/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [RP](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: MUMBAI ATTACKS DEPLORED, SECURITY LEVELS RAISED

MANILA 00002624 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Paul W. Jones,
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In the wake of the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, the Ambassador and senior Mission members spoke with top Philippine national security officials Nov. 27-28 to apprise them of the current situation in Mumbai, urge them to remain vigilant for any potential attacks here, and reiterate the USG's commitment to stay closely engaged with the Philippine government in our shared effort to protect against terrorism. Noting that there were no known Filipino fatalities thus far from the attacks, the Philippine secretaries of defense and foreign affairs condemned the attacks and voiced concern about their impact on the Philippines, including the possibility Philippine-based terrorists could take encouragement in staging their own attacks. Mission will continue its comprehensive efforts to assist Philippine intelligence, military, and national security officials with their ongoing operations to thwart potential terrorist activities. END SUMMARY.

HEIGHTENED CONCERN

¶2. (C) In a Nov. 27 conversation with the Ambassador, Philippine Secretary of National Defense Gilberto Teodoro expressed concern about the attacks in Mumbai and said that he wanted to be sure that Philippine intelligence and security organizations were as prepared as possible to disrupt any possible similar terrorist acts. The Ambassador agreed that the Mumbai attacks were very troubling, and reassured Teodoro of the Mission's fundamental commitment to assist his and other Philippine agencies with information and resources they needed to disrupt any similar attacks in the Philippines. Ambassador offered to share analysis as it became available and to stay in touch with Teodoro as the situation in Mumbai develops.

¶3. (C) Teodoro said his intelligence chief ordered the Philippines' New Delhi-based defense attache to travel immediately to Mumbai to assess the situation. Concerned about the attacks' possible impact in the Philippines, Teodoro said Philippine terrorists could be encouraged to take advantage of the approaching holiday season. He acknowledged that, at present, there were no known Filipino fatalities in the attacks, which were strongly condemned by a government spokesperson.

RAPID OUTREACH

14. (C) Following the call, the Ambassador instructed Mission's RSO, Regional Affairs, and Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) chiefs to contact leaders at the Philippine National Police (PNP), the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA), and military intelligence offices to pass on all available information and underscore our commitment to prevent any such attacks here. The Ambassador convened an Emergency Action Committee meeting November 28 to address the situation's impact on the Philippines (septel).

COOPERATION LAUDED

15. (C) At a November 28 breakfast with the Ambassador, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo said he was appalled at the senseless attacks and expressed relief that there were no signs of Filipino deaths or massive disruption to Philippine nationals. He expressed deep appreciation for the Ambassador's commitment that all U.S. Mission elements would continue to work closely with the Philippine government to disrupt potential terrorist attacks here in the Philippines.

COMMENT

16. (C) Recent efforts by security forces to counteract the terrorist threat have served the Philippines well. PNP Chief Jesus Verzosa told RSO the PNP was in a heightened state of alert based on earlier threat information and following the reported November 21 arrest of two suspected Abu Sayyaf Group members in the metro Manila area, which allegedly included

MANILA 00002624 002.2 OF 002

the seizure of an improvised explosive device (IED), a gun, and a hand grenade. The RSO observed that the recent arrests could send a strong signal to any potential attackers in Manila, but, given the severity of the attacks in Mumbai, the PNP needed to remain vigilant. The Regional Affairs chief noted in conversations with intelligence officials that both sides should use the Mumbai experience to examine appropriate courses of action should a similar tragic event arise in the Philippines. The broader message from the U.S. Mission to Philippine officials was that they should not let their guard down after recent law enforcement successes against terrorists.

JONES